

I am truly frightened and appalled by Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air this pseudo-documentary hatchet job on John Kerry in the last days before the election.

In my home state of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger films basically disappeared from the airwaves several weeks before the election, and I cannot believe that Sinclair wouldn't be held to the same standard.

Newspapers aren't bound by the fairness doctrine, but you would never find a newspaper chain that would force each paper to run a particular story, regardless of conditions in the local market.

If an entity orders you to run a story, it doesn't matter whether it's the government, or a corporate owner -- it's still defeating the purpose of the First Amendment.

The FCC has to understand that a very volatile situation exists in this country. A lot of folks believe that the last election was stolen, and they believe the current regime has only the interests of corporations at heart. If one of these same corporations starts to use the public's airwaves to force-feed the administration's line to the public, it will ensure that any Bush victory in November is tainted, at best.

Local television news is superficial enough without it being produced out of town by a bunch of happy-talk conservatives (or conversely, a bunch of big city liberals) out of touch with local values.

If Sinclair's license renewal process involves nothing more than a returned postcard, then that's an outrage and an utter abdication of your responsibility.

This is not an issue about Republicans or Democrats, but right and wrong, and defending the weak against the powerful.

The Sinclairs of the world are the Standard Oils of the 21st century. If Teddy Roosevelt were alive today, he'd be shaking his fist in your face, demanding you do something.

Thank you.